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OF THE

Library Assistants' Association.

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THE INDICATOR.

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"The Cotgreave Indicator is that in use in the majority of the British Free Libraries."

"The Free Library: Its History and Present Condition." By J. J. OGLE. 1897.

"The Recording Indicator is almost certainly the invention of Mr. A. Cotgreave, Public Libraries, West Ham, London, E., and is that most largely used."*

"THE SCOTSMAN."

"All the London Free Public Libraries (which use indicators except one), have adopted the Cotgreave System, which has been found to work well." †

N.B.—See also "Greater London," by E. Walford, M.A., F.S.A. (page 360); "Methods of Social Reform," by Prof. W. Stanley Jevons, M.A., F.R.S., LL.D.; "Public Libraries," by T. Greenwood, F.R.G.S.; &c., &c.

* As a matter of fact it will be found in about nine-tenths of the Libraries using indicators. Over 300 Institutions are now using it.

† Sixty-two Public Libraries in London and the Metropolitan area are using it.

MAGAZINE RACKS.

"FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY, WANDSWORTH.

The Cotgreave Magazine Rack has been in use in the news-room here since the opening of the Library. I can unhesitatingly speak of its value, for it greatly tends to keep the tables tidy. Being so compact it takes up little room, and a reader can see at a glance the periodical he wishes to read.*

C. T. DAVIS, Secretary and Librarian."

* The Cotgreave Racks are in use at some 50 Libraries and Literary Institutions, from which similar testimonials have been received.

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THE CONTENTS-SUBJECT INDEX,

TO GENERAL AND PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

Price to Subscribers, 7s. 6d. Price when published, 10s. 6d.

(800 copies have already been subscribed for.—See List).

"DAILY NEWS."

"A 'Contents-Subject Index to General and Periodical Literature' would, if properly done, be a great time-saving machine. Such a work is being undertaken by Mr. A. Cotgreave. The first part, which is now before us, is distinctly promising. It will be helpful to many students and readers."

"DUBLIN REVIEW."

"The Editor of the 'DUBLIN REVIEW' (Canon Moyes), desires me to thank you for the specimen of the 'Contents-Subject Index,' and to say that he has formed a high opinion of it, in fact he has already found it useful."

T. W. HUNTER, Librarian, Archbishop's House, Westminster.

Similar expressions of opinion have been received from a large number of leading journals, and from many well-known English and American Librarians.

N.B.—The Contents-Subject Index will be supplied to all Library Assistants at the reduced price of 5s., if applied for before publication.

Full particulars of the above and also of other Library Aids sent upon application





THE LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION.

FOUNDED 1895. FIFTH SESSION. YEAR 1899-1900.

Members are requested to carefully read the announcements appearing on this page, as no further intimation of meetings and other arrangements may be expected unless special circumstances require the same.

SUMMER PROGRAMME.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

The date fixed for this visit is Wednesday, September 26th, when members are requested to meet at the Dean's Yard entrance to the Cloisters at 3.15 p.m. The variety of interests, ecclesiastical, archaeological, architectural, bibliographical, and bibliothecal, which a study of the historic edifice and its contents ministers to, cannot fail to attract a large gathering, especially when we have an assurance of the best possible guidance for the occasion.

AUGUST MEETING.

In accordance with the notice in the August number of the journal, a visit was arranged on Wednesday, August 22nd, to Kew Gardens and picturesque historic Richmond.

Special notices containing full particulars of the excursion were sent by the Hon. Secretary to all the libraries of London and district previous to the date named above.

The main body of the party started by boat from Charing Cross, and though the weather was not all that could be wished, the river journey proved very enjoyable.

Members and friends from Richmond and district joined forces at Kew, and after a visit to the celebrated Gardens, the party proceeded to Petersham where tea had been arranged for by Mr. Crockford of Richmond Public Library. The table was prettily decorated with flowers and fruit.

The ladies kindly presided, and when all had partaken of refreshments, Mr. Rees, on behalf of the company, thanked those who had organized and those who had assisted in the day's enjoyment.

Mr. Crockford then conducted the party through the town to the Public Library, pointing out the residences of Rhoda Broughton, Lady Cook, and other notable people at present located in Richmond.

Some of the party who were visiting the locality for the first time were struck by the beautiful view obtained from Richmond Hill.

The library was visited on the invitation of Mr. Barkas, the Librarian, the collection of drawings, etc., relating to past and present Richmond being a special attraction.

An agreeable time was brought to a close about 9 p.m.

N.W. BRANCH: AUGUST MEETING.

The usual Monthly Meeting was held in the Reference Library, Manchester, on Wednesday, August 22nd, Mr. J. H. Swann presiding.

Before opening the discussion on "Open Access," the Chairman called upon the Hon. Secretary to perform a duty on behalf of the

Association—which was the presentation to Mr. C. W. Sutton, Hon. President of the N.W. Branch, of a suitably-framed copy of the photographic group of the N.W. Branch recently taken at Hawarden.

In handing over this token of the goodwill and esteem of the North-Western members for their Hon. President, the Secretary briefly acknowledged the great obligation they were under to Mr. Sutton for his countenance and help in the working of their Association, and he expressed the hope that it would give Mr. Sutton as much pleasure to receive, as it was theirs to give, this small token of their appreciation of the manner in which he had always met their efforts to better the condition of the N.W. Assistants.

Mr. Sutton having suitably acknowledged the spirit which had moved them to give to him, quite unexpectedly, a token of their esteem, thanked them for their recognition of whatever he had been able to do for the L.A.A.

The Chairman (Mr. J. H. Swann) then opened the discussion on "Open Access," which was well sustained, several members taking part in it. We append the remarks of Mr. Swann in opening the subject, which will enable members who were not present to follow the line of argument adopted.

The question of "Open Access" to the shelves of public libraries is one that is every year becoming more and more urged upon the attention of librarians. Opponents as well as advocates are bringing the matter to the forefront of discussion, and helping to create something of a demand for this privilege from the more educated of the clients of the libraries.

In the first place, it is well to point out that "open access" is too liberal a term; it should be qualified by the addition of "safeguarded." No one advocates unrestricted access to the shelves; that would inevitably result in chaos and a long list of "missing" items at the stock-taking. At least, so we think, but I may here quote our experience at the Manchester Reference Library.

In the large reading-room we have quite a thousand volumes, many of them valuable reference works, unrestrictedly open to the public. The veriest stranger may walk in, and, without even signing his name, consult any of these volumes. Yet the loss has been very trifling, and the wear and tear, though undoubtedly greater than before, can hardly be termed severe, in consideration of the enormously increased use. The experience has certainly been encouraging, and though many of the readers do not replace the volumes in their exact order, that is easily remedied. When, however, the question of throwing open a whole library is considered, the latter objection becomes of increased importance, but those who have had practical experience do not seem to find that trouble of any great moment.

As the public libraries are intended for the public good, it seems to me that the whole matter depends on the answer to this question—Does the public derive greater benefit from "safe-guarded open access" than from the closed shelf system?

As a reader and a searcher among books, I must say that there is no comparison between consulting the books on the shelves and having to search for what I imagine to be suitable ones from entries in

catalogues, and I am quite sure that the public would derive infinitely more benefit from "safe-guarded open access" than from opposite mode.

But whilst I am in favour of allowing readers to select their books from the shelves, I would not throw open all the stock. In visits to one or two open access libraries in London, I have noticed that one great objection to the system, viz.—the blocking of the passage-ways between the presses by the borrowers—chiefly occurred in the parts devoted to fiction. Now, I do not think the advantage to novel readers of consulting the books on the shelves is worth that nuisance. Very few people read novels for any set educational purpose, and fiction could, therefore, be just as well selected from a catalogue. With this restriction there would be a chance of attracting novel readers into more profitable regions.

When I consider the vast difference there is between actually seeing a volume and merely reading an entry in a catalogue, I am more than ever convinced that the citizens have an absolute right of access to the shelves. How are they otherwise to realise the wealth of their literary possessions?

Score: of times when cataloguing beautifully illustrated volumes, or delightful books of travel, or essays, I have felt almost pained to think how utterly inadequate an idea of the book the catalogue entry gave. Annotations help somewhat in the right direction, but actual contact with the book is by far the best. Losses, no doubt, there will be, but the added advantages are worth the extra loss unless it becomes unreasonable.

An "open access" library has not so tidy an appearance as a "closed" one, but use is the function of a public library. Combine ornament and use as much as possible, but do not restrict use for the sake of ornament. Tidiness, after all, may become a kind of fetish, to be worshipped at the expense of the library's usefulness.

The librarian of an open-access library has, I think, a much greater opportunity of coming into personal contact with his readers, and of rendering them more or less valuable services.

N.W. BRANCH: SEPTEMBER MEETING.

The next meeting will be held in the Library of Chethams College, by the kind permission of the Feoffees, on Wednesday, September 19th, 1900, at 8 p.m.

A Paper dealing with Open Access will be read.

NOTE.—Members should take this opportunity of inspecting the 17th Century Printing Press, &c., recently installed in the Library.

WESTMINSTER PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

(St. Margaret and St. John the Evangelist.)

The Library Act of 1855 was adopted by these Parishes at a Public Meeting on the 19th of May, 1856. Lord Hatherley, who worked energetically in conjunction with the late Mr. William Ewart, M.P. for Dumfries Burghs, in the passing of the Act, was appointed one of the first Commissioners, and attended the meetings regularly until his



WESTMINSTER PUBLIC LIBRARY.

death in 1881. These parishes were the first in London to adopt the Library Act. It is not unfitting that the parish where lie the ashes of Caxton, and where he pursued the avocation that has done so much to popularise literature, should also be the first to adopt the machinery of a Public Library for the further diffusion of knowledge amongst the people. No other London parish followed the example until 1883, since which date over thirty Public Libraries have been opened in the metropolis.

The Chief Library was opened on 10th March, 1857, by the Rev. Dr. H. H. Milman (the Rector of St. Margaret's and Canon of Westminster, and afterwards Dean of St. Paul's), in a building on the east side of Great Smith Street, formerly occupied by the Westminster Literary, Scientific and Mechanics' Institution.

There is an outlying district of St. Margaret's about two miles distant from the mother parish, owing to the formation in 1725 of the Parish of St. George, Hanover-square, and to the ancient donative distribution of the old lands of the Abbots of Westminster. This district includes a portion of Hyde Park and of Knightsbridge, and adjoins the parishes of Kensington and Chelsea. This outlying part being so far from the mother parish, it became necessary to supply it with a Library and Reading Room. Accordingly on 29th June, 1858, the Knightsbridge Branch of the Public Library of these parishes was opened at 3, Trevor Square.

In 1888 the freehold of the premises of the Chief Library was purchased by the Church House Trustees, and it became necessary that other premises should be found. Several sites were suggested. Finally it was determined by the Commissioners to purchase houses on the opposite side of the street. Possession was obtained in April, 1892, the ground was cleared, and the building put in hand.

The new building, a view of which is given in this number, was designed by Mr. Francis J. Smith, F.R.I.B.A. It is composed of red brick with freestone dressings, and the total frontage is 103 feet. The principal entrance is in the centre of the building, with a private entrance at the southern end, giving access to the Librarian's apartments and the Board-room. Within the southern entrance is a vestibule leading to the issue department, which is so placed as to control the public rooms, which are all on the ground floor, and are divided by plate-glass screens. The reference reading-room (36 feet by 25½ feet) is at the rear of the counter, and adjoins the newspaper room (60 feet by 25½ feet), both being top lighted. The ratepayers' and ladies' reading rooms (respectively 31 feet by 19 feet and 20½ feet by 13 feet) occupy the front portion of the building at the northern side; on the other side of the principal entrance are the Librarian's office and book-store. The basement is occupied by a large book-store and house-keeper's rooms, while the upper part is devoted to the Board-room and Librarian's apartments, with store rooms above. Electric lighting has been adopted throughout. The carved panels in the second floor windows represent emblems of St. Matthew, Edward the Confessor, St. John the Evangelist, St. Margaret, St. Peter (Westminster), and the Rose and Crown of England. On the first floor are medallions of Spenser, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Dryden, Milton, and Tennyson, with the Westminster and Royal Arms on the sides of the centre doorway.

The total cost of the site, building and furnishing, was about £14,000. The public rooms are fitted in polished American walnut.

On 21st August, 1893, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, accompanied by Mr. W. Burdett-Coutts, M.P., performed the opening ceremony.

The number of books in the Chief Library is 24,500, and in the Branch 4,600.

As recorded in the last Annual Report, the total issue of books in the several departments of both libraries made a daily average of 414 volumes.

Mr. Henry E. Poole, the Chief Librarian, was appointed in April, 1881.

THE NEW LIBRARIAN OF KIMBERLEY.

A party of L.A.A. and other friends met Mr. Dyer at a farewell supper on July 30th, prior to his departure for South Africa, Mr. W. G. Chambers occupying the chair in the absence of Mr. Rees.

Speeches were made by Messrs. Denton, Hogg, Ogle, Meaden, Roberts, Snashall, Thorne, Ward, and others, and, in proposing the toast of "Our Guest,"

The Chairman briefly alluded to Mr. Dyer's services to the L.A.A., and expressed the belief that he (Mr. Dyer) had a career of great usefulness and prosperity before him. Mr. Dyer would be the first trained British Librarian to go to South Africa, and expressed the hope that, after the war had been brought to a successful termination, Libraries would experience an era of renewed progress all over that country. He hoped that when the time came to appoint a librarian of the capital of the new Federated States, Mr. Dyer would be the man selected. He asked those present to drink "success and good speed" to the parting guest. The toast was then drunk with musical honours and enthusiastic applause.

Mr. Dyer, in reply, thanked those present for the kindly manner in which the toast had been received. He felt it a great honour to him to be the first assistant to obtain an appointment in the Colonies. He did not see why the L.A.A. should not be represented all over the world. "Hands across the Sea" was a very good motto, and he looked forward confidently to the time when, not only South Africa, but also Canada and Australasia would have English assistants as their librarians, probably some of those he saw before him that evening. The L.A.A. would always have his keenest sympathy and heartiest support. He hoped, however, that such an Association would never be necessary in South Africa, and that the L.A.A. would one day be affiliated with the Library Association.

The Dunottar Castle, with Mr. and Mrs. Dyer on board, arrived at Cape Town at 6 a.m. on August 21st last.

The Committee, at their last meeting, unanimously elected Mr. B. L. Dyer an honorary member of the L.A.A.

THE RANGE AND INFLUENCE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—III.

The following interesting contribution to this subject appeared as a leading article in the columns of the "Islington Gazette" on the 23rd ult. :—

Colonel W. Langton Coke, one of the Local Government Board Inspectors, may be a very excellent gentleman and withal a most capable officer for the work he is called upon to perform, but a remark dropped last week at the Inquiry at Highgate leads me to suppose that his education is yet far from complete. When gathering information about what the District Council propose to do in the way of a branch library for Highgate, Colonel Coke hazarded a query as to whether public libraries in general had accomplished that for which they were established. For what pray were public libraries established? To continue the education of, and provide healthy intellectual recreation for, both young and old; to foster and at the same time satisfy the spirit of enquiry and the general thirst for knowledge which marks the close of the nineteenth century; to permit those of limited means to keep themselves abreast of the times, and by judicious reading to improve their minds, strengthen their reasoning faculties, and, in short, become worthier citizens and better equipped servants of the State. In how much of this have we succeeded? To give adequate answer would require more columns than I have lines at my disposal, and I could wish that a Greenwood would undertake the task. Let Colonel Coke visit Hornsey Central Library (among others) on a Friday or Saturday evening, and watch the constant exchange of books, noting the titles and characters of those brought in and those taken out, and doubt then, if he can, whether a public library is not the greatest and most blessed of all municipal institutions, even though it were purchased at far greater cost than the statutory penny rate. "Are public libraries not frequented by the tipster?" asks Colonel Coke. Probably they are—if the "tipster" or his wife or children require books to read, and why not? But if the gallant Colonel thinks a "sporting gent" is going to walk half a mile to the public library to get racing intelligence from the newspapers at that institution, he is mightily mistaken. They are not of that ilk. A few there be, working-men, who when their days work is done drop in, perhaps to see "what's won;" but they are comparatively few. For my part I could wish they were multiplied a hundredfold, for then the public houses would be shorn of a little patronage. No, the faddists may try as they will, but they cannot point to public libraries as instruments of evil, in that direction, at least. Colonel Coke, most gallantly, bracketed with the tipster in his query, "the young lady in search of a novel." Of course, young ladies go to the libraries for novels—in their hundreds, in their thousands, and, in the name that's wonderful, Why not? Is a public library doing no good service to the community unless its every borrower demands an abstruse and diffuse masterpiece of philosophy or theology—a "Wealth of Nations," the "Nichomachian Ethics," or "Lux Mundi?" I shall not enter into the controversial subject of what are and what are not good novels, and will only say ditto to Mr. Johnston, of the Hornsey Central Library, when he claims that "We have only the best novels in our library." The more good, solid novels

from the public library, and the fewer "snippety" penn'orths from the news-shop, the more dutiful daughters and sons, and sympathetic men and women we shall have. It is too late to decry public libraries, and at the present moment I am rejoiced at nothing more than the progress that is being made towards completing the tale of such useful buildings designed for Hornsey.

A JUNIOR ESSAY ON HOBBIES.

I am a junior assistant, and I do not know much about Hobbies. Being on duty to-day in the reference library I looked up the matter in the Encyclopædia, and I am sure I do not know why library assistants should be asked to write essays on the use and abuse of Hobbies. I have kept pigeons, and several other sorts of birds, including a magpie, but I never kept a hawk, which is a nasty cruel bird.

I suppose Hobbies were selected because they are inveterate enemies to Larks, not that we assistants have much opportunity either to have or keep Larks.

I hope next year some subject not connected with natural history will be selected for me to write on, but I hope that these few remarks will gain me the prize.

"PICKLE."

NOTES AND NEWS.

BOW.—The Vestry have invited tenders for the erection of a Public Library building.

CARDIFF.—The Corporation is borrowing £800 for the erection of a building for a Branch Library at Cathays. Two branches are being built in the Roath and Grangetown suburbs.

EASTBOURNE.—An elevation and plans of the new Library and Technical Institute are shown in the "Building News" of August 18th.

FALKIRK.—Plans and elevation of the New Library Buildings appeared in the "Building News" of August 10th. Besides the usual departments, a recreation room, 50 feet by 39 feet, has been provided, where games can be played and smoking indulged in. There will be accommodation for 16,000 volumes, the "Cotgreave" indicator will be used, and the building is estimated to cost from £4,500—£5,000.

HILL-OF-BEITH.—The Public Library and Reading Room at this little Scottish village received the profits of a public-house run on the Gothenburg system.

HULL.—The foundation stone of the new Central Library has been laid by Sir James Reckitt. Provision will be made for a ladies' reading room.

ILFORD.—The District Council has appointed a Committee to prepare a scheme for establishing Public Libraries.

PLUMSTEAD.—The Woolwich Library building is approaching completion, and it is reported that advertisements for a librarian will shortly appear.

ST. BRIDE FOUNDATION INSTITUTE.—Mr. Passmore Edwards has generously defrayed the cost of the Talbot Baines Reed collection which is now deposited here, and a catalogue is being compiled preparatory to the ceremonial opening on November 20th.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—On Thursday evening, August 2nd, an interesting ceremony was performed in the Reading Room of the Stoke Newington Public Library, when Ernest G. Bliss, an evening assistant here, was presented with the certificate of the Royal Humane Society for rescuing a drowning boy from the River Lea on May 18th. The presentation was made by the Rev. Preb. Shelford, M.A., J.P., Chairman of the Library Commissioners, in the presence of Mr. A. Royle, Mr. E. J. Sage, Dr. White, the library staff and a large number of assembled readers.

STREATHAM.—The Libraries Commissioners have resolved to place a brass tablet, bearing the following inscription, in a suitable position in the Tate Library. "The Public Libraries Commissioners desire to place on record in this institution their appreciation of the gift of this building, and also of the public services rendered to the Parish of Streatham by their late Chairman, Sir Henry Tate, Bart., J.P."

WIGAN.—The Earl of Crawford, late President of the Library Association, has been presented with the freedom of the borough in recognition of his eminent services in connection with the Public Library, to which he has also at different times made valuable donations of books and MSS. He possesses one of the finest private libraries in the world.

WOLVERHAMPTON.—The Public Library, built as a Diamond Jubilee Memorial, has been opened by the Duke and Duchess of York.

WORKSOP.—The Urban District Council are about to erect a Public Library and Institute.

L.A. CONFERENCE.

The Twenty-third Annual Meeting of the Library Association will be held at the Bristol University College, September 25th to 28th.

L.A. EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

Four prizes for the best reports on the Summer School Series of Visits to Libraries this year were awarded as follows:—

Prizes of One pound—

- 1.—J. Radcliffe; East Ham.
- 2.—B. M. Headicar, A. Moslin; St. Saviour's (joint report).

Prizes of Ten shillings—

- 3.—F. A. Chamberlain; Rotherhithe.
- 4.—G. E. Roebuck, E. H. Parsons, A. A. R. Anderson; St. George-in-the-East (joint report).

PARIS EXHIBITION.

The International Congress of Librarians, under the presidency of M. Léopold Delisle, Chief of the Paris National Library, decided to meet every five years in future. Twenty-two countries were represented at the Conference recently held at the Sorbonne.

Two donors, who wish to remain anonymous, offer three prizes for "les meilleurs mémoires" on "Insects that injure books, and the best means of destroying them." One donor offers 1,000 francs and 500 francs respectively, and the other 1,000 francs. Intending competitors must communicate with M. Henry Martin, Secrétaire Général du Congrès, à la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, à Paris.—*Vide* "Le Temps," Août, 29.

By the request of the American Library Association, a national library exhibit was prepared at the New York State Library, Albany. It aims to illustrate by carefully selected types the many-sided modern work of American libraries. There are five main divisions:—monographs; pictures; charts; picture bulletins, etc.; books; appliances. Three copies of a little pamphlet in English, French, and German respectively, describing this exhibit, will shortly be placed in the L.A.A. Library, by the kindness of the A.L.A.

A copy of the "Library Assistant" finds a place in Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son's special exhibit of newspapers and periodicals.

NEW MEMBERS.

JUNIOR.—Miss G. M. Morgan (*Shoreditch*), Messrs. G. H. Barber (*Shoreditch*), F. A. Chamberlain (*Rotherhithe*), S. Goodin (*Oldham*).

APPOINTMENTS.

FARADAY, Mr. J., Bournemouth, to be Senior Assistant, Hornsey.

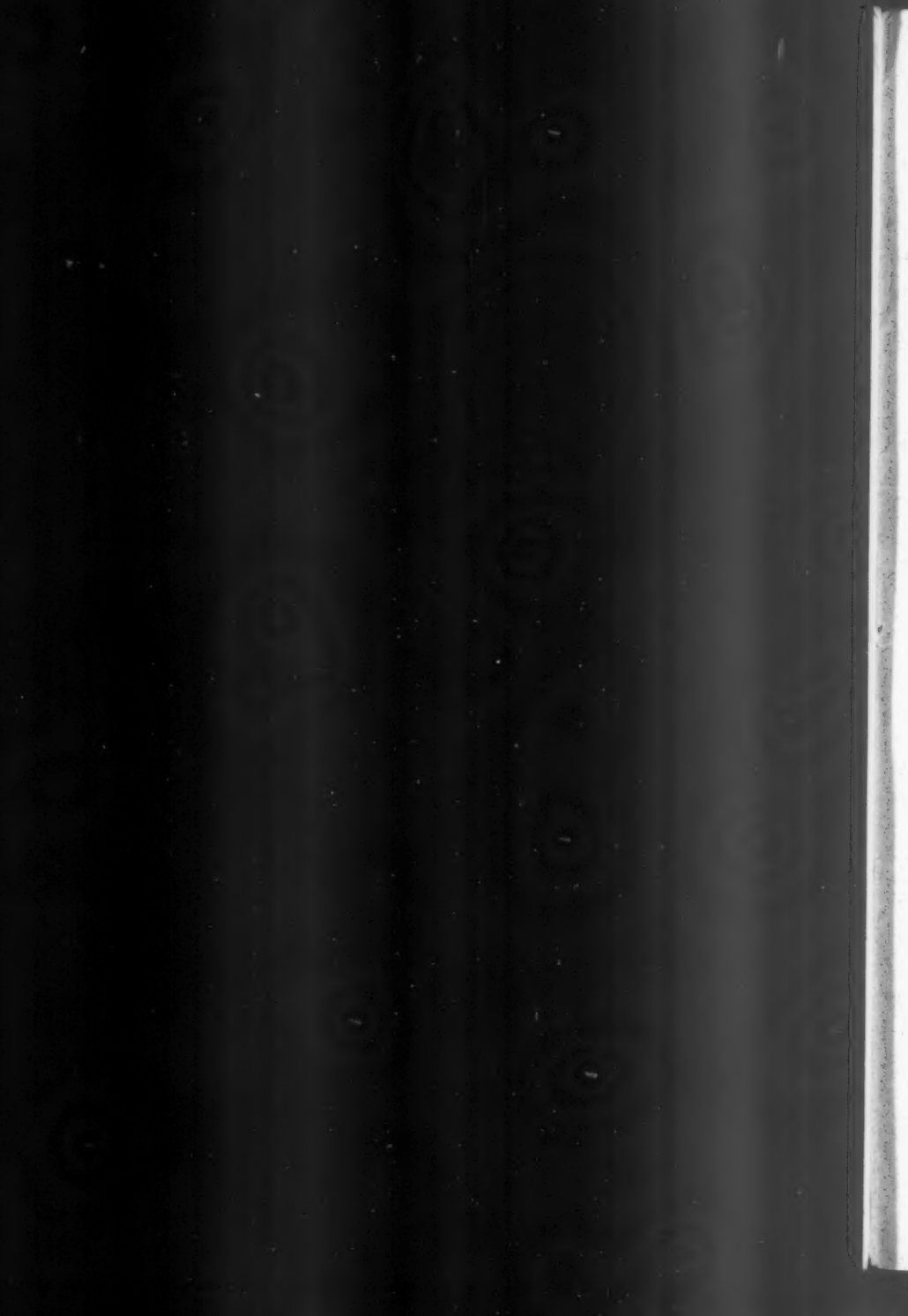
HOLMES, Mr. H. J., Assistant, Battersea, to be Librarian of the Great Western Railway Institute, Paddington.

NOTICES.

All communications relating to the Journal should be addressed to Mr. Henry Ogle, *Hon. Editor*, 60, Constantine Road, N.W.

All other communications relating to the Association should be addressed to Mr. J. W. Brown, *Hon. Secretary*, L.A.A., Public Library, Kingsland Road, N.E.





THE CARD CATALOGUE.



EVERY possessor of a library, no matter of how few volumes, recognises the desirability of keeping a proper record of it. This can only be done with perfect satisfaction by means of the card system, and the following are its chief advantages:—

- 1.—Strict alphabetical sequence can always be maintained.
- 2.—Books can be catalogued under author, title and subject, and arranged in the same index, cross references being made where necessary.
- 3.—When a volume is lent to a friend, a note to that effect can be entered on the card in a permanent or temporary way, and date of borrowing and return affixed.
- 4.—Any notes respecting date of accession; where purchased or how otherwise obtained; the owner's or his friend's opinions and comments on the book; remarks as to re-binding, etc., etc., can all be recorded upon the card relating to the book in question, as the owner desires.

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J. HENRY QUINN,

Chief Librarian and Clerk to the Commissioners.

PARTICULARS, PRICES, AND SAMPLES ON APPLICATION.

J. BANTING & SON,

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KING'S ROAD, CHELSEA, LONDON.

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